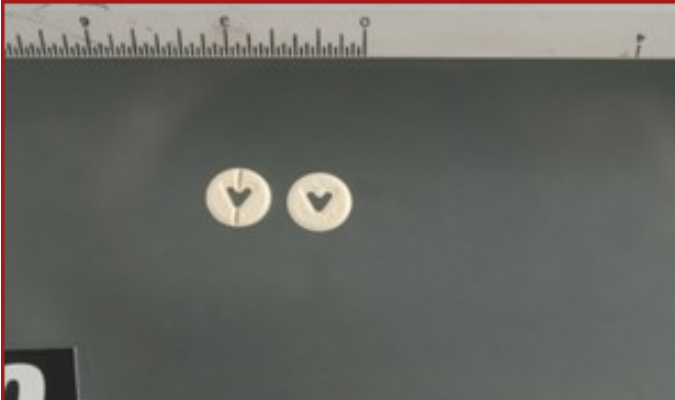


Did You Know?

Benzodiazepines

SEP 13

481-5998



Benzodiazepines are widely prescribed for a variety of conditions, particularly anxiety and insomnia. Benzodiazepines are depressants that produce sedation, induce sleep, relieve anxiety and muscle spasms and prevent seizures. The street names are benzos or downers.

The most common benzodiazepines are the prescription drugs Valium, Xanax, Halcion, Ativan and Klonopin. Tolerance can develop, although at variable rates and to different degrees. Abuse is frequently associated with adolescents and young adults who take the drug orally or crush it up and snort it to get high. Abuse is particularly high among heroin and cocaine abusers. They are associated with amnesia, hostility, irritability and vivid or disturbing dreams. Benzodiazepines slow down the central nervous system and may cause sleepiness.



Effects of overdose include slurred speech or confusion, severe drowsiness, severe weakness, staggering, shallow respiration, clammy skin, dilated pupils and rapid pulse, coma, and possible death.

Legal status in the United States: Benzodiazepines are controlled in schedule IV of the Controlled Substance Act.

Benzodiazepines are only legally available through prescription. Many abusers maintain their drug supply by getting prescriptions from several doctors, forging prescriptions, or buying them illicitly. Alprazolam and diazepam are the two most frequently encountered benzodiazepines on the illicit market.

If you think you may have become mentally or physically dependent on benzodiazepines check with your doctor. Do not stop taking it suddenly.